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Report on PADIS activities (1990-1992), Review of approved work programme (1992-1993) and PADIS' orientation during Phase IV, 1992-1996

I. Report on PADIS activities (1990-1992)

1. During the period under review, January 1990-February 1992, PADIS activities included the delivery of training, advisory services and other forms of technical co-operation for ECA member States, data base development, network building, user services, servicing of legislative and other meetings undertaking of studies and issuance of publications. Details of each of these areas follow.

Training Activities

2. Training activities included the holding of national level training courses for staff of PADIS national participating centres, subregional training courses in computerised documentation techniques, training courses in the management of documentation and information centres and internships.

3. In order to improve the ability of national centres (which grew to 36 during the period) to effectively participate in the PADIS network, PADIS held group training courses in PADIS methodologies for a number of these centres during the period. Training curriculum included utilization of computer programmes for bibliographic data base management as well as other aspects of PADIS tools and methodologies for bibliographic work. The following courses were organized during this period:

a. Training course in PADIS methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software for staff of the Library Schools of Makerere University, University of Zambia, ESI, Rabat, Morocco, University of Dakar, University of Ghana, and one participant from the ECA Niamey-based MULPOC, 26 March-6 April 1990, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

b. Training course in PADIS methodologies, MINISIS and micro-CDS/ISIS software, for staff of the University of Botswana Library, University of Dar-es-Salaam, and the Institute of Agricultural Research, Uganda, 14-25 May 1990, Addis Ababa.

c. Training course in PADIS methodologies for participants in a subregional workshop (Eastern and Southern Africa), organized by the University of Botswana, 4-8 June 1990, Gaborone, Botswana.

d. Training in PADIS methodologies and micro-CDS/ISIS for participants from, Ghana, Uganda and Lesotho, 15-26 October 1990, Addis Ababa.

e. Training course in PADIS methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software for members of the PADIS Standing Committee on Harmonization and Standardization, 19-23 November 1990, Addis Ababa.

f. Training course in desktop publishing techniques for participants from Malawi, Ghana, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe 26 November-5 December 1990, Addis Ababa.

g. Training course in computer networking for participants from PADIS selected National Subregional and Institutional Participating Centres, 25 February-1 March 1991, Addis Ababa.

h. Training course in PADIS methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software for participants from Zimbabwe, 20 May-1 June 1991, Harare, Zimbabwe.

i. Training course on e-mail and computer-mediated communications for participants from Senegal, 5-9 August 1991, Dakar, Senegal

j. Training course in PADIS methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software for participants from Uganda, 7-18 October 1991, Kampala, Uganda.

4. At the request of PADIS national co-ordinating centres, training in the production of nNational DEVINDEXES, the utilization of PADIS data bases and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software for bibliographic data base management were organised by PADIS. During the period under review, the following training in this category took place.

a. Training staff in Sudan in the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software, 26 March-4 April 1990, Khartoum, Sudan.

b. Training staff in Ghana in PADIS methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software, 17-27 April 1990, Accra, Ghana.

c. Training staff in Burkina Faso in PADIS methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software 16-20 July 1990, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

5. PADIS also organised two subregional training workshops for needs of documentation centres, in PADIS methodologies and the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software:

a. Training courses, one for English Speaking and another for French Speaking participants, in the use of micro-CDS/ISIS software and co-operative information system for member States of the Kagera Basin Organization (KBO), 14-23 May 1990, Kigali, Rwanda.

b. For PADIS national and institutional participating centres in the Central Africa Subregion, held in Yaounde, Cameroon, 2-13 December 1991.

6. The area of management of documentation and information centres is gaining much attention in Africa. A specific activity in this area was:

Regional workshop on "Human Resources Development for the management of information and documentation centres in Africa, Harare, 10-14 December 1990.

7. PADIS' training activities also included the operation of a fellowships programme for staff of national and institutional participating centres. During the period the following fellowships were awarded for training at PADIS.

a. Training of United Nations Volunteer from KBO in statistical data base development, 20-24 November 1991, Kigali;

b. Training of UNDP/Lagos documentalist in PADIS methodologies and operation of African experts data base, 18-27 November;

c. Training of Malawi National Documentation Centre documentalists in PADIS methodologies, 27 November-3 December 1991.

Advisory services

8. During the period under review, at the request of member States and institutional participating centres, PADIS delivered advisory services on a wide range of topics relating to development information management.

National level Advisory Services

9. At the national level, the following advisory services missions were undertaken:

a. To KBO, to install computer equipment and provide training on software, 9-31 January 1990.

b. To Ghana, to assess national needs for development information infrastructure, 20-29 January 1990, Accra, Ghana.

c. To Uganda, to assess national needs for development information infrastructure, 7-11 May 1990.

d. To Lesotho, to assess national needs for development information infrastructure, 11-15 June 1990.

e. To Zimbabwe, to assess national needs for development information infrastructure, 10-14 September 1990.

f. To Cameroon, to assess national needs for development information infrastructure, 26 November-1 December 1990.

g. To Equatorial Guinea, to assess national needs for development information infrastructure, 14-19 January 1991.

h. To Congo, to assess national needs for development information infrastructure, 6-10 May 1991.

i. To Senegal, to assist in the development of computerized data bases on standards and related activities for the Senegalese Institute for Standardization; and to participate in the National Workshop for setting up the Senegalese National Information Network, 27 May-14 June 1991.

j. To Ethiopia, to assist in the development of a national information policy, through the national seminar on this subject, Addis Ababa, 27-29 November 1991.

Other Advisory Services

a. To the Government of Uganda and the German Foundation for International Development, during their seminar on "Development of National Information and Documentation Network for Uganda," Kampala, 1-9 March 1990.

b. To the Institute of Development Economics and Planning (IDEP) to assess institutional needs for development information management capabilities and its potential as a PADIS institutional participating centre, Dakar, 30 April-5 May 1990.

c. To the Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute (ESAMI) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC),

during their Information Management Curriculum Development Workshop, 21-25 May 1990, Arusha, Tanzania.

d. To the Standing Conference of East, Southern and Central African Librarians, on information for women and development, Kampala, 21-22 June 1990.

e. To the International Energy Foundation, Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on the establishment of an energy data bank, library and information network, 26 August-1 September 1990.

f. To the Government of Kenya and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) during their workshop on the development of a national information and documentation network, 30 October-9 November 1990, Nairobi, Kenya.

g. To the African Regional Centre for Technology, on the utilization of microcomputers and appropriate software for information processing, Rabat, Morocco, 22-25 October 1990.

h. To the Third Session of the Advisory Committee of the Population Information Network for Africa, Accra, Ghana, 15-18 October 1990.

i. To the African Regional Organization for Standardization for revision of ARSO-DISNET Guides, on development of course content for a seminar on information technology and preparation of a programme for the meeting of ARSO-DISNET Advisory Committee, Nairobi, Kenya, 30 July-8 August 1991.

j. To the first regional meeting of African correspondent institutions of the International Centre for Economic Growth, to enter their network of economic planning and policy information for dissemination to African researchers, planners, and policy makers, thereby increasing amount of information accessible through PADIS and easily available to African users, Nairobi, Kenya, 2-5 October 1991.

k. To the International Energy Foundation for the establishment of a Global Energy Data Base, Libya, 24 October 1991.

l. To the African Regional Centre for Technology on the use of computer-mediated communications in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, 28 October-1 November 1991.

Data base development

10. Data base development expanded on several fronts. PAD-DEV, the PADIS bibliographic data base on economic and social, scientific and technological aspects African development literature to which national participating centres contribute, continued to grow with input from ECA sources as well as from national and institutional participating centers.

11. The receipt of inputs to PADIS-COMP, the PADIS complementary files series (data bases acquired from United Nations organizations and other international bodies) increased. Several new data bases were acquired on CD-ROM including those from the World Bank and UNESCO. These data bases, together with PAD-DEV, were used to generate the Selective Dissemination of information (SDI) service and for retrospective search services.

12. The data base on African experts grew by several hundred entries during the reporting period. At the same time editing for quality control was done on the data base. Contents of the data base were used for search services and for the preparation of the 1991 edition of the *Directory of African Experts*.

13. In order to supply information on data bases created and maintained in Africa, a new data base was opened, in conjunction with PADIS' institutional participating centres:

> Data base of data bases and information systems in Africa regional and subregional institutions (PAD-DAB)

Network building

14. PADIS' network consists of its national, subregional and institutional participating centres. Developments occurred during this period in of each of these areas.

15. During the period, the number of national participating centres increased from 29 to 36, an increase of 19.4% during the period under review. Those countries which joined the network during the period were: Kenya, Libya, Tunisia, Djibouti, Cameroon and Burundi. Many of these national centres received advisory services from PADIS and started to contribute inputs to PADIS data bases. Growth was particularly strong in the area of institutional participating centres, with the number of such centres growing to 36 and with this category becoming increasingly active within the network.

16. The status of the subregional centres was called into question by the UNDP Evaluation Mission of PADIS, which completed its work in July 1990 (see para 30 below). The Evaluation Mission felt that developments in information technology had rendered the need for subregional centres as collection and processing nodes redundant. The question of their situations was brought to the attention of the Subregional Technical Committees for PADIS, which met in the first and second quarters of 1991. These Committees recommended their retention, subject to funds being raised for their continuation.

17. In order to increase the utilization of the network and increase the delivery speed of requests and responses during this period, PADIS, began its project on "Computer Networking in Africa." The project is testing newly-developed forms of information technology which have not been introduced hitherto or only on a limited basis in Africa for improved development information exchange. If these tests are successful, efforts would be made to introduce the technologies on a wide scale in an effort to alleviate some of the information availability problems the Africa region faces. Participants in this pilot project have been drawn from PADIS' national focal points, PADIS' institutional participating centres and from PADIS subregional centres.

18. Twelve members of PADISnet experimental project in computer-mediated communications who were trained in computer networking at a workshop held in Addis Ababa from 25 February-1 March 1991 succeeded in effecting on-line communication to PADIS and to each other either through PADIS or through GreenNet.

User services

19. The project continued to deliver services to users in the form of: (a) published indexes to development literature; (b) SDI bulletins; (c) customized question/answer service; and (d) documents/microfiche delivery.

20. Subscribers from North Africa were incorporated into the Selective Dissemination of Information Programme. The number of requests for the customized question/answer service increased from 197 in the previous period to 246 in the present period, an increase of 24.8%.

21. One hundred twenty requests for information on African development experts, institutions and projects were filled during 1989-1990. Nearly 1025 documents, in hardcopy and microfiche format, were delivered to individuals and institutions during the period.

22. National and institutional participating centres also received magnetic tapes and diskettes containing references to development information from PADIS and PADIS COMP bibliographic, referral and statistical data bases.

23. Online services are being developed for worldwide utilization through the PADIS computer networking project (see para 17 above).

Legislative meetings

24. PADIS serviced the Information Science Committee of the Sixth Session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers held in Addis Ababa (JCPSD) in January 1990 and the Follow-up Meeting of the North Africa Committee of Officials held in Tripoli, 14-15 May 1990. Technical reports were prepared for and considered by these meetings.

25. PADIS serviced its three Sub-regional Technical Committees held respectively in Lusaka, Zambia (19-29 March 1991) for the Eastern and Southern Development Information System (ESADIS), Niamey, Niger (26-27 March 1991) for the West African Development Information System (WADIS) and Tangiers, Morocco (23-24 April 1991) for the North African Development Information System (NADIS).

26. The Fifth Meeting of PADIS Regional Technical Committee met in Addis Ababa from 24-25 April 1991. Its report and recommendations were presented to the Twelth Meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole (TEPCOW) was held in Addis Ababa from 29 April-7 May 1991 and the Twenty-sixth session of the Commission and seventeenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers which was held in Addis Ababa from 9-13 May 1991.

27. The Standing Committee on the Harmonization of Documentation and Information Systems in Africa held two meetings, one on 14-16 November 1990 and again from 11-13 November 1991.

Studies

28. In order to keep abreast of developments in information development in the region, PADIS undertook a number of studies during the period. These included:

a. Study on the utilization of microcomputers by documentation and information centres in Africa (January 1990);

b. Study on development information utilization problems and user needs in Francophone countries of Africa (December 1990);

c. Study of development information utilization problems and user needs in North African countries of Africa (January 1991).

Further studies are planned on the evaluation of PADIS products and services.

Publications

29. During the period, PADIS published eight issues, in English and French, of its quarterly *Newsletter*. Current awareness bulletins of *DEVINDEX-Africa* were published (1990, nos. 1, 2 and 3; 1990 cumulative index, 1991, no. 1). A diskette utilizing computer graphics to explain PADIS operations was produced and distributed to the PADIS network. The *Directory of Development Institutions in Africa* was published (1991) as well as a new edition of the *Directory of African Experts* (1991). Also published was the *Directory of data bases and information systems in Africa.*

Evaluation Mission

30. In July 1990 UNDP completed an in-depth evaluation of PADIS, under project RAF/86/053. The findings of the evaluation mission were generally quite positive. Among these were:

> *The creation of a development information system and network for Africa, which PADIS is assigned to address, still remains an important and worthy objective meriting the support of the international donor community.*
>
> *The need for and usefulness of the activities under Project RAF/86/053, PADIS III, are recognized and expressed as such by the Member States.*
>
> *In working towards meeting the objectives of the project, in implementing the activities directed at the realization of these objectives and in producing the related outputs, UNDP resources have been used in a useful way and in accordance with the conditions as mentioned in the project document.*
>
> *Starting from a meager basis, PADIS III has shown remarkable progress in all fields related to its immediate objectives (growth in number of National Participating Centers, increase in number of databanks, increase in contents of databanks, increased use of products and services, training, advisory services and servicing of meetings provided.)*
>
> ***Recommendations***
>
> *Given the state of the results of PADIS activities which begin to bear fruit in the Member States, the Mission recommends continued funding for PADIS through the UNDP Fifth cycle.*
>
> *The Mission strongly recommends that the required inputs be made available to PADIS in order to enable it to implement the mandate implied in Resolution 658 (XXIV), which places emphasis on development information by changing the*

name of PADIS from Pan African Documentation and Information System to Pan African Development Information System. This implies a redesign of the project to reflect the new emphasis on development information.

In order to increase its sustainability PADIS should continue its search for financial sources other than UNDP: (external assistance, member states' contributions, income generating activities) Efforts should be intensified to ensure the further regularization of PADIS within ECA before the year 2000.

31. It must be pointed out that PADIS' activities during the reporting period were accomplished in an atmosphere of uncertainty on the part of its staff. Through 1990, it was known that no funds were available on the UNDP grant, which covers 80% of PADIS' staff costs, for personnel in 1991. By administrative action at the end of 1990, UNDP funds were rephased to cover personnel costs for the first half of 1991; only in **August** 1991 did UNDP approve funding for the second half of 1991 (i.e. two months into the second half!). At the time of this writing, UNDP had just approved a further extension for PADIS staff for the first three months of 1992. Only at the end of that time will it consider funding PADIS for its fifth programming cycle of 1992-1996. While PADIS is making efforts to diversify its sources of funding among several donors, it has been unsuccessful, in an atmosphere of zero budget growth, in three attempts to secure regular budget financing from the United Nations despite proposals made by ECA on its behalf.

32. PADIS' activities since 1986-87 have been part of the Section 13 Programme Budget of the United Nations, but without any regular budget appropriation for them. Beginning with ECA's submission of the 1988-1989 programme budget, ECA has made efforts to secure regular budget resources for PADIS' activities under its Programme on Development Issues and Policies Programme. However, the Programme Planning and Budgeting Board of the United Nations at its 119th meeting decided that efforts should be made both by ECA and Headquarters to seek continued extrabudgetary resources for the 1990-1991 programme budget; in case these did not materialize, it said, resources could be sought from the regular budget. (This alternative was not used as funds materialized from UNDP during the period.)

33. The Economic and Social Council Committee for Programme and Co-ordination examined the extra-budgetary status of PADIS at its thirty-first session (1991). Its report on *Programme Questions: Evaluation* [1] analysed the effects of PADIS' continuing reliance on extrabudgetary resources on ECA's programmes, and noted UNDP's position advising ECA to shift part of the costs of the administrative and support services of PADIS to the regular budget of the Commission. Its report stated "In the case of PADIS, the project included some activities of the type that are normally

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[1] E/AC.51/1991/3 (4 April 1991).

funded by the regular budget that were justified as support and administrative costs of the project activities."

34. As a result of this report as well as of ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 716 (XVII), ECA has requested the Fifth Committee meeting in New York in December 1991 to consider the provision of two posts, at the P4 and P5 levels, respectively, for PADIS in the ECA 1992-1993 programme budget. Regrettably this effort was unsuccessful.

II. Approved work programme (1992-1993)

35. PADIS' approved work programme for 1992-1993 falls within Section 23 of the United Nations budget, under Regional Co-operation for Development: Economic Commission for Africa. Within this section, PADIS' activities come under Subprogramme 1: Development issues and policies in the ECA region. Part of this subprogramme, in the context of information, is the need to focus on policy and institutional development for enhancing the capability of Member States to collect, store, retrieve and disseminate information on issues of African development.

36. Under this subprogramme PADIS is responsible for producing a quarterly newsletter on development information in Africa. As technical material, it wil maintain the database on social and economic, scientific and technical aspects of development in Africa and on African experts in social, economic, scientific and technical aspects of development in Africa. Under co-ordination, harmonization and liaison activities, this subprogramme calls for participation in the activities of the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary bodies on issues of long-term development objectives for Africa (one of ACC's subsidiary bodies in the Advisory Committee on the Co-ordination of Information Systems).

37. This subprogramme also calls for under operational activities: "fields projects of PADIS: enhancement of information capabilities of member States (XB)". ECA will also continue to service the Technical Committee for PADIS, as one of its subsidiary bodies.

38. The difficulty posed by the above is that the activities listed (the publication of the newsletter, maintenance of the two databases and the servicing of the Technical Committee) are included in the regular budget, but without any resources attached to them. It was hoped that PADIS would secure funding from the United Nations regular budget for 1992-1993 but at noted above this did not materialize.

III. PADIS' orientation during Phase IV, 1992-1996

39. PADIS' objectives and proposed activities for 1992-1996 are closely in line with UNDP's three themes for UNDP's fifth intercountry programme for Africa which covers the same period.

Regional co-operation and integration

(a) **Rationalization, harmonization and strengthening of existing subregional intergovernmental organizations**

40. Since 1987 PADIS has been working with existing subregional and regional intergovernmental organizations to assist them in improving their information control and management. It established the Standing Committee on the Harmonization and Standardization of Information Systems at Sub-regional and Regional Institutions in Africa in that year to meet annually to work out problems of information exchange in order to improve information flows for development planning in the Africa region. It has assisted organizations involved in regional co-operation through the Standing Committee, as well as through the delivery of advisory services and training workshops and seminars. African regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations participate in the PADIS network as "institutional participating centres"; some 30 such organizations have now signed co-operating agreements with PADIS. Activities in this area will be intensified during the fifth cycle.

(b) **Establishing an African Economic Community**

41. PADIS sees the establishment of the African Economic Community as a major focus for its efforts in the next five years. According to its draft project document submitted to UNDP, "Information support for [African] development becomes particularly crucial in the context of the efforts which are under way to implement economic co-operation at sub-regional and regional level to build the African Economic Community and Common Market, initiated and supported by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). . . . The Pan African Development Information System (PADIS) can play a major role in strengthening information resources and capabilities of African countries, regional institutions, including those of the regional economic communities and groupings, and the private sector in Africa, both by providing the necessary information support and assisting in the development of viable information systems." PADIS has already been working with several subregional and regional economic groupings to improve their information systems and support, and it works closely as well with the secretariat for the African Economic Community. PADIS has already begun to work with the following regional groupings recognized by the Abuja Treaty (June 1990).

- The Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA);
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS);
- The Southern African Development and Co-ordination Conference (SADCC);
- The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU).

(c) **Assistance in key sectors with intrinsic integrative characteristics, including science and technology, trade and finance**

Science and technology

42. PADIS has been a leader in technological innovation in Africa since its establishment in 1980. PADIS had recognized the need to stimulate the promotion and application of information technology in the Africa region. It was the first information system in the region to use computer technology for database development in 1980. Since that time, it has moved from costly mini-computers to micro-computer technology for its databases and has advised African governments and institutions accordingly to realize the benefits of this technology at minimal cost. During the past phases, PADIS continued to experiment with new information technologies, including CD-ROM, facsimile, scanners and electronic communications to determine their applicability to the African situation. Africa needs to develop a high level of self-reliance in the establishment and use of information systems. In order to do this, it needs to develop information technology know-how. Thus, for 1992-1996 PADIS has proposed the delivery of advisory services to national Governments, as well as regional and subregional institutions and subregional and regional economic groupings on the utilization of appropriate information technology; PADIS will also test and experiment with information technology in order to determine its appropriateness for transfer in the Africa region. Training in computer basics (MS-DOS operating systems, word processing) will be delivered, along with courses in PADIS methodologies for network members, courses in CDS/ISIS and on desktop publishing. PADIS is proposing the co-organization with the Special Action Programme for Administration and Management in Africa (SAPAM) of courses in the utilization of information technology for senior managers, in order to sensitize them to the adoption and utilization of this technology.

Industrial development

43. In both the key sectors of industrial development and science and technology UNDP's fifth Intercountry Programme aims at assisting in the building of networks between national institutions for the provision and exchange of information, technology, services and personnel and for the strengthening of science and technology networks. PADIS has been a pioneer in the field of computer networking in Africa. In 1990 PADIS initiated a pilot project in information technology to facilitate communications related to development information in the Africa region. Entitled *PADISnet*, the project has linked selected nodes of the PADIS network from four

subregions of Africa. Some 12 national centres and institutions are presently linked to PADIS electronically. Nodes are using modem communication to send messages, request data base searches, exchange information over bulletin boards and participate in electronic conferences on issues related to development information and information technology. PADIS is also acting as a gateway for the network to access external data bases and networks.

44. Particularly prominent in this network development has been the networking of science and technology institutions, including the African Regional Centre for Technology, the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (Ghana), the Science and Technology Commission (Ethiopia), the Centre National de Documentation (Morocco), the African Regional Organization for Standardization; along with links with other science and technology networks such as HEALTHNET, NGONET, the Food Technology Information Exchange and ESANET. PADIS is also holding discussions with *Satelife*, a North American-based NGO, to host the first ground station in Africa for a health science and technology network.

Trade and finance

45. During the UNDP fifth Intercountry Programme cycle PADIS has proposed a concentration on information vital to economic co-operation and integration, with specific emphasis on trade information. It recently participated in the ECA Expert Group Meeting on the Establishment of a Regional Trade Information System (Addis Ababa, December 1991) where delegates recommended that such a system be based at PADIS. These activities are very much in line with UNDP's focus, under the theme of mechanisms for intra-African trade promotion including trade and investment information systems. Among the activities PADIS has proposed in this regard are:

- Developing a regional data bank on African markets, trade opportunities, type and quality of products at the market and country levels, including statistical data, trade control and regulation measures, addresses of African economic operators, chambers of commerce, trade promotion centres etc.

- Developing a regional data bank on standards, technical specifications, certification activities, metrology and quality control laboratories.

- Assisting in the development and organization of trade information services in African countries, the Organization of African Unity and in economic communities and groupings so as to enable those institutions to fully contribute to and benefit from the network.

- Providing support to trade promotion activities by supplying required information, documents and data banks.

- Training personnel involved in trade information activities.

46. These activities are also in line with Article 42 of the Abuja Treaty calling upon African member States to promote an intra-community trade information network, "linking computerized trade information systems of existing and future regional economic communities and individual member States of the Community." PADIS is also working closely with PTA, OAU, ECCAS and UDEAC on the establishment of regional and subregional trade information data banks.

Long-term strategic planning for socio-economic transformation

47. PADIS' overall activities are aligned with the objective to facilitate the establishment of a strong information base to contribute to long-term strategic planning for sustained development. PADIS' activities have been designed on the assumption that solutions to Africa's socio-economic problems require *inter alia* a constant and adequate supply of accurate and timely information. A dynamic approach to information sharing can contribute to a re-awakening of African development, particularly through a strategy emphasizing networking and economic integration.

48. By working through national participating centres increasingly located in ministries of planning, PADIS will contribute to the strengthening of regional information systems and to the development of statistical capabilities (through its integrated approach to development information [2]), which are UNDP's expressed aims under this theme.

49. PADIS' dissemination of development information and information management techniques are vital tools for the improvement of national long-term planning, policy analysis and development management.

50. PADIS' activities in networking, as described above, will also be instructive with regard to the subprogramme focus on establishing policy analysis systems *with linkages to internal and external databases*.

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[2] This approach was elaborated in the document "Adaptation of PADIS to changing needs," ECA/PADIS/RTC/7, April 1991. Copies of this document are available as a background document to the present conference.

Fostering an enabling environment for human development

(a) Strengthening capabilities for development

51. PADIS has been active and will continue to be active in strengthening Government's capabilities for further development by its provision of training for staff of national participating centres and national information networks in information management techniques and utilization of information technology. In response to the problem of weak management capacity in African countries, PADIS has been active in the field of information management development. During the fourth cycle PADIS undertook innovative training in information management and development, with the organization of annual workshops on information management techniques and problems for managers of African information systems. This activity will continue in the fifth cycle, along with the organization of special courses on information systems for managers, *viz.* training for middle-level government managers in government information systems with a view to sensitize planners and decision makers to the importance of and techniques for the use of development information.

(b) Women in development

52. PADIS has been especially concerned with the importance of promoting women in development. In the area of women and development PADIS has worked by (1) encouraging the training of women in information systems, (2) developing and disseminating information on women and development and (3) undertaking efforts to establish AFRIFEM, an information system on women and development in Africa and (4) delivering advisory services to member States on the establishment of information systems/units on women and development. In an effort to upgrade the skills of women in Africa, PADIS has encouraged African governments and institutions to nominate a high percentage of women for its training courses and fellowships. During the fourth cycle, the percentage of women trainees/fellowship holders was 63% Regarding the development and dissemination of information on women and development in the region, PADIS made special efforts during the fourth cycle to gather, index and disseminate information on this topic. It devoted special articles to this service and to the publication of information on women and development in its newsletter. As a result of these marketing efforts, fully 23% of its requests for database searches and 18% of its requests for documents delivery related to women and development.

53. PADIS also undertook a special initiative with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), under a supplemental grant, to hold an Expert Group Meeting on the Establishment of an Information System on Women and Development in Africa in Addis Ababa in 1989. The Expert Group Meeting proposed the design for such a system under the title AFRIFEM. Regrettably, for reasons beyond the control of PADIS, further efforts to establish AFRIFEM have remained dormant until this year, when discussions with UNDP and UNIFEM have indicated that work on this project

will be revived. PADIS also delivered advisory services, at the request of the Government of Cameroon, to the Women Documentation Centre of the Ministry of Social Affairs of Cameroon on choice of technology for its information activities. During the fifth cycle PADIS will continue to endeavour to be a major resource for information on women and development in the region through the delivery of advisory services, organization of training focusing on women and development information and resumption of efforts to establish AFRIFEM.

TCDC and TCAG

54. PADIS has also been a leader in the promotion of both TCDC and TCAG, through its African experts data base established with UNDP assistance in 1982. It has been supplying its African experts data base upon request to national governments, the private sector, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the offices of UNDP in more than 20 countries of the region. Additionally, it has given technical assistance to a number of UNDP national offices in the Africa region in developing national data bases of experts. Intensification of activities in this regard during the fifth cycle will promote the principle of *national execution*. In its training activities, PADIS has worked through national, subregional and regional institutions, using experts and resource persons from the region.

Request for catalytic funding

55. The funding requested from UNDP for the fifth cycle is meant to be catalytic. PADIS will undertake advisory services missions to member States and regional institutions in order to effect cost sharing. It is anticipated that in the case of the member States that they will use their Indicative Planning Figures (IPF's) to request further services and products from PADIS, and that the regional institutions and intergovernmental organizations will pay for PADIS' services, thus building cost recovery into its further activities.

Conclusion

56. The major points of emphasis in the next cycle will be on networking, both in the substantive as well as the technological sense, and in the diversification of information products. Present areas of activity will be continued, with particular attention to improvement of the marketing of PADIS and of its training programme.